

TOWN PLAN & ZONING COMMISSION

MINUTES

Thursday, October 27, 2011

The Town of Bloomfield Town Plan & Zoning Commission held a meeting on October 27, 2011 scheduled for 7:00 p.m. at Town Hall, 800 Bloomfield Avenue in Bloomfield, Connecticut with the following members present:

Present:

Barry Berson, Chairman
Nick Panke, Secretary
Fannie Gabriel
Elene Needelman
Barbara Reid
Joseph Washington

Also Present: Thomas Hooper
Maureen Sullivan,
Recording Clerk

Absent: Charlotte Gregg
Alfred LeFebvre
Byron Lester

1. Call to Order

Mr. Berson called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m. Mr. Berson explained that there were four members present. In order for an application to pass, all members must vote in favor of the application. The applicants can decline to present tonight if they want to postpone to a further meeting.

2. Minutes of September 22, 2011

Ms. Needelman made a motion to approve the minutes of September 22, 2011. Ms. Gabriel seconded the motion and it was approved unanimously.

Ms. Reid joined the meeting and sat on the applications this evening (there were five members sitting on the applications at this point).

Item 5 was discussed next.

5. Street acceptance request concerning Edwards Way.

Mr. Hooper stated this project was approved by a different developer. Mr. Terry Lawlor picked up the project this summer and finished the remaining public improvements. The request is to accept the roadway. The Commission needs to take a vote on whether to accept the roadway and then it will go before the Town Council. Two items need to be completed; the first is a special grate on the detention basin outlet pipe that is currently being manufactured and the second is CL&P needs to put the heads on the four street light poles. Mr. Hooper suggested voting on the request to accept Edwards Way and move it to the Town Council with the two conditions to be completed before the town takes them over.

Mr. Panke made a motion to recommend to the Council the street acceptance request concerning Edwards Way. Ms. Gabriel seconded the motion and it was approved unanimously (5:0).

Item 6 was heard next.

6. Street naming request of KAMAN.

Mr. Hooper stated Fidelco came to the town and asked to rename Old Iron Ore Road to Fidelco Way about a year ago. This was recommended by the TPZ and the Town Council. Fidelco never got back to Mr. Hooper on the effective date of the change. In the meantime, Kaman asked Mr. Hooper to change the roadway to Kaman Way. An agreement between Fidelco and Kaman was reached to rename the road Vision Way. This is a private road. The recommendation was to recommend to the Town Council to change the road formerly known as Old Windsor Road and Old Iron Ore Road and most recently known as Fidelco Way to Vision Way.

Mr. Panke made a motion to recommend to the Council to rename the street concerning Fidelco and Kaman to Vision Way. Both are private roads. Any issues down the road should be handled by staff. Ms. Gabriel seconded the motion and it was approved unanimously (5:0).

Item 7 was heard next.

7. Regulation interpretation request.

Mr. Hooper stated someone was interested in opening a tattoo parlor in town. Staff reviewed the Regulations and did not find the use “tattoo parlor” listed. Personal service shops are listed in the Regulations and Mr. Hooper wanted to know if the Commission felt a tattoo parlor should be considered a personal service shop. Personal service shops are allowed in the business zone and the I-1 zone with a Special Permit.

The consensus from the Commission was that tattoo parlors were a personal service.

3. Application of Equity Funding Mortgage Company, LLC for a zone change from I-2 to GWB at a portion of a parcel west of 27 Maplewood Avenue, 9 Maplewood Avenue and a parcel east of 903 and 885 Blue Hills Avenue, know as lot numbers 89-1-85, 89-1-75 and 89-1-80, and more specifically shown on the proposed zone change map on file with the Bloomfield Town Clerk (continued from September 22, 2011).

Mr. Panke made a motion to take the application off the table. Ms. Needelman seconded the motion and it was approved unanimously.

Mr. Ed Lally, a Licensed Professional Engineer and Land Surveyor in Windsor, represented the applicant. The applicant was comfortable with five members sitting on the application this evening. The properties were discussed. Paperwork was submitted and the three signs were posted. The Gateway District was discussed.

Mr. Scott Hesketh, a Licensed Engineer with F.A. Hesketh & Associates of East Granby, discussed the traffic report. The site was discussed. Automated traffic volume counts were conducted in August 2011. The traffic report analyzed trip traffic for an I-2 zone versus a Gateway Zone.

Mr. Washington joined the meeting and sat on the applications for the remainder of the meeting (there were six Commissions voting on the remainder of the items).

Mr. Hesketh finished discussion of the traffic report. The town requested the applicant consider an access directly to Rt. 218 through Douglas Street. A revised analysis was submitted on October 26, 2011. Based on the existing and future traffic volumes in this area, based on the trip generation potential of the existing I-2 zone and the proposed district Gateway zone and the ability of any applicant to provide offsite improvements to provide additional capacity at the intersection of Route 218 and Route 187, it was Mr. Hesketh's professional opinion that the approval of a zone change on the subject parcel will not present a significant impact to traffic operations in the area.

Mr. Lally discussed the I-2 and Gateway District in the Regulations. A copy of the zoning map was shown to the Commission. The Plan of Conservation and Development was also discussed. Mr. Lally stated for reasons quoted in the Plan of Development, the Zoning Regulations and the physical attributes of the property and its location and access, the Blue Hills Gateway District is the most appropriate zone for this parcel.

Mr. Berson discussed the procedures for public hearings.

Mr. Hooper discussed the site and traffic at the location. Mr. Jonathan Thiesse, Town Engineer, reviewed the traffic report and agreed with what was read in the report and with the outcomes and potential solutions. The property and Regulations were discussed. Correspondence in favor and against this zone change was received by staff.

Attorney Tom Moriarty spoke on behalf of Mr. Dominic Marandino, who was opposed to the zone change application. Attorney Moriarty deferred his comments until others had a chance to speak.

Questions from the Commission:

Mr. Washington asked how this proposed change will enhance and serve the residential neighborhoods. Mr. Lally replied there is no specific proposal at this time. The applicant is proposing a zone change; therefore the Commissioners would need to look at the uses generally allowed in the Industrial Zone and the Gateway District.

Mr. Panke asked if the applicant used Douglas Street, what would happen to Cottage Grove Road. Mr. Hesketh anticipated if the applicant had access to Douglas Street, a new traffic signal would need to be installed at the intersection of Route 218 and Douglas Street. The State Traffic Commission would be included if there were traffic signals.

Ms. Gabriel asked about entering through Blue Hills Avenue and exiting on Douglas Street. Mr. Hesketh stated the applicant has not thought about making it a one way circulation.

Mr. Berson asked about eastbound traffic on Cottage Grove Road and the need for a right turn lane. Mr. Hesketh stated the analysis shows a right turn lane for eastbound Rt. 218 and a right turn lane for westbound Rt. 218. The applicant believed right of ways exist in those locations to provide an improvement.

Comments from the public:

Attorney Tom Moriarty spoke on behalf of Mr. Dominic Marandino, Sr., owner of 1055 Blue Hills Avenue, and his son, Mr. Dominic Marandino, owner of Sav-Mor Supermarket. They are opposed to this zone change application as this does not conform to and is inconsistent with the current Plan of Development. Attorney Moriarty discussed the Plan of Development. The applicant has not provided any marketing information showing any compelling need for additional retail. The vacancies in town were discussed. Attorney Moriarty discussed the number of accidents at Blue Hills Avenue and Cottage Grove Road. Attorney Moriarty had questions about the data used and assumptions made with the traffic report and stated the traffic report of 2006 was significantly different than the current report. Attorney Moriarty stated the applicant failed to show any compelling need or reason to change the zone for the benefit of the community and asked the Commission to deny the zone change.

Comments from the Commission:

Staff received letters in favor and against the zone change. Buckley Broadcasting, WDRC AM on Blue Hills Avenue, J. Rudolfo from 8 Picket Lane, Bloomfield, R. Rudolfo of Bloomfield Avenue and Joshua Rodulfo of Blue Hills Avenue were against the zone change. Joseph Mancini of Maplewood Avenue, Dunkin Donuts on Blue Hills Avenue, James Zafiris, Derma M. Walker of Maplewood Avenue, Landsa Tafae, Carmen Balfour of Maple Avenue were in favor of the application. Jean and Ceal Odams of 99 Park Avenue were against the application.

Ms. Reid commented about the traffic in this area and was concerned about the zone change.

Mr. Washington asked why a specific proposal was not discussed. Mr. Washington did not understand how the Commission could make a decision without specific proposals.

Ms. Needelman commented it was very difficult to make a final decision on this matter without a plan of development. Traffic was discussed.

Mr. Panke stated the Commission is making a zone change, not voting on any proposals that may happen. The emphasis on retail seems to be exaggerated and there could be other things developed at this location. Traffic concerns were discussed. The traffic report was discussed.

Ms. Gabriel agreed with Mr. Panke. This is a zone change request.

Mr. Berson stated the Gateway District was created to impose stricter requirements along Blue Hills Avenue. The Gateway District gives the Commission more control over what goes in and will vote in favor of this change.

Attorney Bill Crowe of 185 Asylum Street, Hartford, stated this property has been vacant and an eye sore for 23 years. The chief complaint of Attorney Moriarty was that the proposal to change the zone was not consistent with the Plan of Development. The applicant is trying to do something that looks forward. Traffic was discussed and Attorney Crowe stated Mr. Hesketh and his firm are one of the premier traffic engineers in the state.

Mr. Hesketh discussed the traffic reports and stated both are correct and valid assumptions and believed the report the Commission had was appropriate.

Mr. Lally discussed the Regulations and stated at this point in time the applicant is requesting a change of this property from Industrial to Gateway and believed it was appropriate and will be beneficial to the town.

Mr. Hooper discussed zone changes.

Mr. Panke made a motion to close the public hearing. Ms. Gabriel seconded the motion and it was approved unanimously (6:0).

Mr. Panke made a motion to approve the application of Equity Funding Mortgage Company, LLC for a Zone Change from I-2 to GWB at a portion of a parcel west of 27 Maplewood Avenue, 9 Maplewood Avenue and a parcel east of 903 and 885 Blue Hills Avenue, known as lot numbers 89-1-85, 89-1-75 and 89-1-80, and more specifically shown on the proposed zone change map on file with the Bloomfield Town Clerk and the reasons are based on the town Regulations that it is the Commission's charge that the I-2 zone can be changed to Gateway District, it is also to the benefit of the area, environment, to the community and to the welfare to the town of Bloomfield. Ms. Gabriel seconded the motion and it was approved unanimously (6:0).

Mr. Washington commented he was late for this evening's meeting because of another meeting. The Commissioner believed he was on track with this application.

Ms. Needelman stated she was more than satisfied with the knowledge as presented that the vote tonight was for a zone change.

4. **Application of First Student Inc.
for a Special Permit for outdoor
storage of school buses at 552
Cottage Grove Road, I-1 zone.**

Mr. Panke read the Legal Notice that appeared in The Hartford Courant. Mr. Berson discussed procedures for a public hearing.

Mr. Roger Kelmen, a Professional Engineer with F.A. Hesketh & Associates in East Granby, spoke on behalf of the applicant. The site was discussed. The applicant proposed using the area outlined by Mr. Kelmen to park their buses. This operation is primarily oriented toward Bloomfield schools. The applicant proposed a large, new, modern fuel tank, fully compliant with codes. This is a large national firm and there are fairly strict regulations for their drivers.

Mr. Hooper discussed his report dated October 13, 2011. Landscaping was discussed. Mr. Kelmen stated he will work with town staff to develop appropriate landscaping and screening.

Mr. Panke made a motion to close the public hearing. Ms. Gabriel seconded the motion and it was approved unanimously (6:0).

Ms. Gabriel made a motion to approve the application of First Student Inc. for a Special Permit for outdoor storage of school buses at 552 Cottage Grove Road, I-1 zone, including all comments made. Mr. Panke seconded the motion and it was approved unanimously (6:0).

Ms. Gabriel made a motion for the meeting to adjourn. Ms. Needelman seconded the motion and it was approved unanimously (6:0).

The meeting adjourned at 9:12 p.m.

Nick Panke, Secretary

Maureen Sullivan, Recording Secretary